

Northborough Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2021

Members Present: Norm Corbin-Chair, Leslie Harrison-Vice Chair, Mike Duchesneau, Brian Smith, Millie Milton, Brian Swanson

Alternates Present; Bob Licht, Tom Reardon, Lorna Helms

Absent: Bruce Chute and alternate: Amanda Derosier Millette

The chair read Governor Baker's emergency public meeting notice.

Meeting Minutes: October 18 minutes, motion by Leslie, 2nd by Millie, unanimously approved.

Old Business:

CPA Funding requests:

- 1) The Trails Committee met with us via video asking for a letter of support for their initial CPA funding request to open the Aqueduct over the Assabet River to foot traffic. Their members present were Mia McDonald, Forest Lyford, Bob Mihalek, Bill Cobb, Brian Belfer and Craig Cox. The CPC request is drafted in the amount of \$133,658 for a contractor to do a preliminary design for pedestrian access. Subsequent funding request will be for final design, bid document preparation and construction. The total project could be about one million dollars. They will investigate grant funding for the project. The Historic District Commission requested to be involved with the project.

Millie Milton moved that we provide a letter of support to the CPC for this project. Brian Smith seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The chair will prepare and send our letter of support to the Trails Committee.

- 2) Brigham Street Burial Ground Beatification: The CPA request has been submitted. The DPW director has provided answers our questions prior from our last meeting.
- 3) Howard Street cemetery signs proposed for newer (Kizer) section: To include one sign at each end of the access road has been submitted. We discussed the less expensive option of mounting the signs directly on the existing stone entrance monuments but decided by consensus that the independent post mount as provided in recent years for older portions of this cemetery would be preferred. Tom Reardon asked whether these signs are compliant with town sign bylaws. When no one could answer, Tom agreed to look into it more.
- 4) Historical Society CPA request: The letter of support for this request for about \$55K was sent. The project is to provide exterior window shutters on the Historical Society building to bring the building back to how it appeared before the 1938 hurricane. It was also reported by Mike Duchesneau that last year's CPC project to paint the Historical Society building was recently completed.

Historic Preservation Plan: Norm Corbin reports there is not a lot left that needs to be completely written. He and Mike Duchesneau are working on a section that includes Native American and archeological topics. Tom Reardon is working on a Northborough architecture history section. Norm Corbin has reviewed our target dates with those of the Master Plan and submitted that section to Planning Board for their review to be sure we are in sync.

Regarding the old state hospital grounds: Chauncy Hall is about to be demolished. Norm Corbin has contacted the Community Advocate suggesting they do an article before the demolition. The signage proposed by DCAM as mitigation, will be designed and prepared by contractors they hire and should only require our comments and edits.

National Register application for the Howard Street old Burial ground: Our contractor has been looking into town records and Historical Society records. She is doing a thorough job in preparing the application. Completion of which is still several months away.

Master Plan Implementation Committee: Millie Milton is our representative on this committee. Their last meeting requested 3 goals and 3 recommendations be submitted from the Historic District Commission.

The Relevant goals she submitted are:

- 1.) Natural, cultural and historic resources be preserved (structures & documents).
- 2.) Repurpose surplus town owned buildings and facilities.
- 3.) Enhance our downtown by providing a pleasing appearance (while preserving historic properties).

The recommendations are:

- 1.) Prepare a historic preservation plan (well underway).
- 2.) Identify short and long term goals for repurposing assets such as White Cliffs.
- 3.) Evaluation of preserving historic structures while enhancing our downtown.

Memberships: We discussed paying for memberships for Preservation Mass. (\$50), Mass. Historic Alliance (\$75) and Northborough Historical Society (\$45). All three were thought to be important resources and a motion to pay these memberships was made by Leslie Harrison, seconded by Millie Milton and approved unanimously.

New Members: Tom Reardon and Lorna Helms need to be sworn in as alternates.

Next meeting: will not be held in December but will be in January likely the 17th or 19th.

Adjournment: motion made by Leslie Harrison seconded by Millie Milton and approved unanimously at approximately 8:15 pm.

Meeting minutes prepared by Brian Swanson